

First Isthmian League points of new season

Wycombe Wanderers 4, Barking 0

WYCOMBE WANDERERS collected their first two Isthmian League points of the season at Loakes Park on Saturday when they struggled to assert their obvious superiority over a poor Barking side.

For the opening half-hour Wanderers tried desperately hard to discover some cohesion and understanding among their ranks but made very little impression against a Barking rearguard that, at times, looked none too sure of itself.

The main threat to Barking's defence came from Wanderers' twin-spearhead of Keith Samuels and Tony Horseman. Barking's anxious defenders found it difficult to contain these two, especially in the second period.

Phillip Payne, who caused the Slough defenders so many headaches in the Hospital Cup game, was unavailable for selection with the result manager-coach Barry Darvill opted for the 4-2-4 formation which proved so successful at the Dolphin.

TONY COMES IN

Instead of Payne, Horseman returned to the attack with Merrick moving out onto the left flank. Certainly, this system seems to suit the Wanderers although at times the midfield link is inclined to breakdown.

For Wanderers supporters this match gave them the first opportunity to size up new signing Julian Lailey. As at Slough, Lailey gave a highly polished and competent display in the "sweeper-up" role and if his progress is maintained he could well prove the find of the season in the Isthmian League.

Although the Wanderers were territorially on top it was, in fact, Barking who came closest to opening the scoring. Maskell leaped out of his goal to snatch a cross and yet after making this splendid save dropped the ball. Warnes pounced on the chance and with the goal at his

mercy shot against the underside of the bar.

Stunned by this narrow escape Wanderers increased the tempo and were finally rewarded in the 35th minute. Guiver conceded a free-kick and Worley floated a high cross into the Barking area. Merrick flicked on and Samuels was on the spot to push the ball past Howard.

The match had started in bright sunshine but the storm clouds were gathering and soon unleashed their contents. In the same vein Wanderers were to really establish their complete authority with three second-half goals.

Four minutes after the restart Read passed-back to Howard only for the Barking keeper to let the slippery ball elude his clutches and sneak free for Horseman to poke the chance home.

MERRICK NETS

This goal seemed to drain a lot of the stamina from Barking and their work became haphazard. In the 60th minute Worley crossed a perfect centre and Howard, under pressure, once again dropped the ball. Merrick seized on the chance to shoot in on the turn.

Barking's defence, which had seven goals blazed past them by Enfield last week, was cracked wide open in the 78th minute by a swift three-man move.

This quick thrust would have opened up any defence in the

League as Baker slipped a clever pass to Samuels, who in turn put Horseman in possession. Horseman striding onto the chance hit the ball with the outside of his foot which viciously swerved it past Howard and into the right hand corner.

Wycombe Wanderers: J. Maskell; I. Rundle, J. Lailey, V. Faulkner, C. Gale; B. Baker, D. Thomas; L. Worley, K. Samuels, A. Horseman, L. Merrick.

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TWO NEW recruits this season, Julian Lailey and Dave Thomas, played a major part in Wycombe Wanderers' convincing Isthmian League victory over Barking.

These two dominated midfield play in a new 4-2-4 formation which improved steadily after the Wanderers had been a little lucky to survive Barking's early supremacy.

Well served by Dedman and Evans in midfield, Barking had rather the better of the first half, but lacked penetration in attack. Five minutes before half-time Samuels put Wycombe ahead from Merrick's pass.

Horseman increased the lead, and for the rest of the game the home side were well on top, Merrick adding a third after a slip by the goalkeeper, and Horseman a fourth 10 minutes before the close.